

Web Steering Working Group

Teleconference Minutes for 22 July 2003

Web Developers' Toolkit - Tina Mihaly described the framework of the Web Developers' Toolkit at: webdev.aphis.usda.gov/webmgmt/Toolkit/Toolkit_base.htm

Tina welcomed feedback and contributions to the toolkit, particularly in these areas:

- Templates (Dreamweaver, PPT, word, project documents)
- Guidelines
- APHIS standards
- Web forums / working groups for designers, developers (metadata, de facto standards, ...)
- Online resources (useful websites for developers)

Intelli-email application - Kathleen gave status of the intelligent email application development. Nancy (Nan) Farnsworth, currently on holiday, will continue working on the code when she returns to work the end of the month. Kathleen, Mary Ann plan to work on the APHIS knowledge map during the 4-8 Aug 03 meetings in Riverdale.

Question: Are any of us familiar with the Gartner Group. Kathleen: Yes, we worked with Gartner on the "best of breed" for the @PHIS Project.

Templates - Brief discussion on templates. Kathleen proposed that we use EPA's approach to templating. (Use of templates is another topic planned for the 4-8 Aug meetings in Riverdale.)

Guidelines for External Links - For the remainder of this meeting, we read through the document Kathleen prepared that outlines proposed guidelines for handling links to external websites. The primary discussion points were as follows.

- It is important that we avoid links to commercial sites.
- Office of Communications must review any link made to an outside organization.
- Question: Who should have authority regarding the handling of links? Discussion: Authority should remain local to the program, e.g., the Program Manager and Webmaster to approve/disapprove.
- Mary Ann: If local authority denies a request for a link, then there should be a mechanism for an appeal (perhaps Office of Communications, or LPA?)
- Comment - we should ask Camille about the VS clearance process.
- Discussion on dealing with sensitive material. Comments on how developing the content for the intranet for DHS was very tricky. Much effort and thought was put into what material could and could not be presented.
- Question to Brenda on how links to outside groups are handled. Brenda - all outside links come from the directors.
- Discussion about vendor links. It is often times efficient for our collaborators to have easy access to vendors that supply a certain type of equipment or item used in a procedure or in field testing. If links to this information aren't allowed, how can we provide this type of information to collaborators?
- Management of links - Webmasters often become the police. Many times they are put in awkward positions. (Hence, the importance of having the policy in place, so that webmasters simply enforce the guidelines that have been set up.
- **Bad links** - over 6,000 bad links currently. We are going to be judged based on how well we maintain our site, and in particular, how many bad links we have at a given time. It is easy for someone to run a program against our site and report how many links are broken. APHIS web team will be responsible for overall QC, and bad links is one area we need to focus on. Kathleen has found a link testing tool. She will add the tool to the Web Developers' Toolkit.

Next meeting:

- Scheduled for 29 Jul 03. A few members of the WSWG will be unable to attend (Diana, Brenda, ...)
- Beginning in August, Web Steering Committee will meet (most likely 2 times monthly). More details forthcoming.